



## Lamoine Board of Selectmen

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### Minutes of October 24, 2013

Chair Jo Cooper called the meeting to order at the Lamoine Consolidated School Gym at 6:32 PM

Present were: Selectmen S. Josephine Cooper, Bernie Johnson, Nathan Mason, Gary McFarland; Administrative Assistant Stu Marckoon, Cable TV operations manager Kendall Davis and approximately 50-members of the general public. Selectmen Cynthia Donaldson had informed the board prior to the meeting that she was unable to attend.

**Agenda Review** - No changes to the printed agenda or addendum were offered.

**Minutes of October 10, 2013** – Stu reported that Cynthia had offered a few corrections to the minutes and the version before the board this evening included those corrections. Bernie moved to approve, Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**Expenditure Warrant 7** – Selectmen signed the warrant in the amount of \$29,229.95.

**Cash & Budget Reports** – There were no questions or comments on this item.

**Foreclosure Courtesy Notices** – Stu reported that he sent courtesy letter to those who have not paid their 2011/12 tax liens as the foreclosure date is on December 17, 2013, and some significant fees will accumulate with the official certified mail notifications. He said that has prompted some to pay.

**Public Hearing Date – Automobile Graveyard Permits** – Jo moved to set November 7, 2013 as the hearing for renewal of two Automobile Graveyard permits to Pro Auto. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**General Assistance Ordinance – Appendix B** – Stu explained this is the updated figure for maximum food assistances. Jo moved to approve the appendix. Bernie 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0, Selectmen signed the adoption form.**

**Resignation from Parks Commission** – Jo moved to accept with regret the resignation of Kerry Galeaz from the Lamoine Parks Commission. Bernie 2<sup>nd</sup>. Jo noted some of the accomplishments during Mr. Galeaz's time as chair of the commission. Selectmen signed a letter of acceptance and thanks.

**Check from Hancock County Government** – Jo said the source of money for a check sent to the town was revenue from the wind turbines near Eastbrook. She said the County Commissioners wanted to give some of the funding to veterans in each community. She said there was some discussion about it on the county Budget Advisory Committee on which she sits. She said the county government contacted each town for its number of veterans' exemptions. She said the question for the town is what to do with the money.

Stu said distributing funds to each person with a veterans' exemption is an incredible amount of work. Jo said the county commissioners appeared to try to do the right thing, but they did not think it through. Bernie asked if the funds were dedicated to veterans. Stu said there are 77 folks who receive a veteran's exemption in Lamoine, and it works out to \$47.44 per exemption. Bernie said advice from Maine Municipal Association Legal Services appears to be that the town first has to vote to accept the gift, and that has to wait for a town meeting vote. Stu said there are several options.

Jo moved to deposit the check and hold onto the funds pending a future special town meeting. Gary 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0,**

**RSU 24 Withdrawal Vote materials** – Stu reported that several folks on both sides of the RSU 24 withdrawal question have asked the town office to distribute literature regarding the vote. He said while the material may appear to be relatively neutral in nature, it is still campaign material and state law forbids it from being distributed within 250-feet of the polling place on Election Day. He said that likely includes during absentee balloting time.

Jo asked if the materials could be placed at the school. Stu said that would be up to the school department. Gary said there should be a place where folks could go to pick up materials. Bernie said other venues might be a better idea and to inform people who wish to have materials distributed to seek another venue. Stu asked about posting things on the town website. Selectmen had no objection, provided a disclaimer is posted with the documents.

Bernie said in regard to the matter of the minimum turnout requirement, he would tend to err on the side of encouraging people to vote. Jo said she agreed that people should always be encouraged to vote. Stu said the town office staff will do nothing to discourage voting, but it would not be an appropriate use of funds to send out any special mailing to encourage voting.

RSU 24 Representative Brett Jones noted that the RSU has requested use of the Cable TV channel to air a meeting the RSU is sponsoring on October 30, 2013. He said there has been a request to use the equipment the town owns for that. He said he feels odd providing that. Jo said all the information should be available through the public hearing tonight that will start in a few minutes. She said she would be against using the town equipment. The other board members agreed.

**Vacation Request** – There was no objection from the Board to a request by Stu to take November 12-15 as vacation days.

**Thank You to Adopt A Highway Volunteers** – Jo said she would sign letters to the many Adopt A Highway volunteers.

**Returnables Request** – Jo moved to approve a request for the proceeds from the returnable containers at the Lamoine Transfer Station from the Lamoine 8<sup>th</sup> Grade for February 2014. Nathan 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

## **Public Hearing – RSU 24 Withdrawal Vote**

Nathan asked if there were guidelines for the public hearing. Jo said she planned to follow the usual format. She opened the public hearing at 7:00 PM

The following people spoke regarding the upcoming November 5, 2013 vote:

- Gordon Donaldson, member of the Local School Advisory Committee and RSU Withdrawal Committee who said he favors withdrawal and provided a history of the process and handed out brochures supporting a yes vote.
- David Bridgham, business manager for RSU 24, who said he favors a no vote. He also handed out information and showed charts, saying Lamoine kids are doing well.
- Brett Jones, the RSU 24 Representative who disputed some of the figures presented by Mr. Bridgham.
- Jon VanAmringe, a member of the Education Planning Committee who gave a summary of the report produced by the committee who said the decision should not be based solely on the financial numbers and that he favors withdrawal.
- Carol Duffy, a teacher at the Lamoine Consolidated School who said she has not made up her mind.
- Karen Morren, the parent of three boys who have gone through the Lamoine Consolidated School and Ellsworth High School who asked what happens after the 2014/15 year. Mr. Jones said there are 10-year agreements in place and there would still be school choice. Mrs. Morren said she has seen better education outcomes since consolidation.
- Mr. Bridgham clarified the school choice issue with MDI High School and praised the work done by the Education Planning Committee.
- Jon Morren, Mrs. Morren's husband, who asked about the impact of special education and curriculum coordination.
- Amy Duym, a teacher at the Lamoine Consolidated School, who addressed curriculum coordination.
- Erica Mazzeo, the curriculum coordinator for RSU 24 who provided more explanations about how the curriculum coordination works.
- Perry Fowler who served as the chair of the Education Planning Committee who said he has a concern if other communities leave the RSU and said he doesn't know how to vote.
- Enid Neleski, the mother of a teacher in the RSU 24 system who said she was concerned about how many jobs might be lost if withdrawal takes place.
- Mr. Jones who provided an answer in regard to the number of positions and said the RSU 24 staff does a good job.
- Mr. Morren who addressed matters of local control.
- Mrs. Duym who said she was trying to think beyond the budget and figure out what the town wants the school to be.
- Dr. Donaldson who said that Mrs. Duym's question was a key question and noted that teachers provided no response when the Local School Advisory Committee put that question to them last spring.

- Mr. Bridgham who said that there seems to have been conflicting stories in regard to teachers being told not to talk about such issues.
- Mrs. Duffy who addressed the questions from Dr. Donaldson in regard to the teacher response last spring.
- Diana Taylor, the mother of a student at the Lamoine Consolidated School who asked about preparation for high schools outside of RSU 24 and whether the curriculum is coordinated with those schools, and whether MDI students would suffer.
- Ms. Mazzeo who answered the high school preparation question, saying the school system is working to meet the common core requirements and MDI schools do the same thing.
- Thomas Duym, husband of Amy Duym, who said the town is damned if it does and damned if it doesn't withdraw. He said costs for education will continue to be expensive, and the town should think about its growth patterns and attracting younger families to the community.
- Nathan Mason, Selectman, and member of the Education Planning Committee and former member of the Local School Advisory Committee who said he has seen a change in Lamoine, and thinks the future would be better without being part of the RSU.
- Mr. Bridgham who discussed the MDI school choice issue briefly and said it would be tough for a stand-alone system to offer as attractive a job as the RSU does.

There being no further testimony, the hearing closed at 8:23 PM

Jo noted the next Selectmen's meeting in November 7, 2013.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst. to the Selectmen